

## Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 EB-04 AID-05 SS-15 NSC-05 L-01

IGA-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 PRS-01 /055 W

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O P 251323Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1803

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2466

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE

BEIRUT FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (BUTZ, EARL); EAGR, US, SY

SUBJ: SECRETARY BUTZ'S VISIT AND PL 480 NEGOTIATIONS

REF: STATE 234419

1. WE ARE GRATIFIED RE QUICK RESPONSE CONCERNING PL-480 NEGOTIATIONS AND LOOK FORWARD TO ARRIVAL MESSRS. SHEGOGUE AND DURNAN. BECAUSE OF RELATED SYRIAN REQUEST, WE MUST REQUEST ONE WEEK'S DELAY IN THEIR ARRIVAL IN DAMASCUS. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE (DAMASCUS 2405), PRESIDENT ASAD HAS GIVEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL QUESTIONS RELATING TO US-SYRIAN BILATERAL PROGRAMS. FOR THIS REASON, KHADDAM ASKED FOR DELAY IN ARRIVAL AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NOOTER UNTIL KHADDAM RETURNED FROM RABAT SUMMIT AND COULD MEET WITH NOOTER NOVEMBER 1.

2. DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN AID TEAM AND KHADDAM AND OTHER SARG ECONOMIC-RELATED MINISTERS NOVEMBER 1 TO NOVEMBER 4 WILL BE LOGICAL PRELUDE TO OPENING PL-480 NEGOTIATIONS  
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ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7. ALSO, AS NEGOTIATORS CONTINUE

THEIR WORK THROUGH PERIOD OF VISIT OF SECRETARY BUTZ, FACT THAT THEY ARE HERE AND WORKING WITH SYRIANS SHOULD GREATLY REDUCE OR ELIMINATE CHANCES FOR NEGATIVE COMPARISON BY SYRIANS OF ADVANCED STATE OF US-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS. WE THEREFORE NOW DO NOT SEE SERIOUS LIKELIHOOD OF FACTORS THAT WOULD HAVE QUAIRER IMPACT ON SUCCESS OF SECRETARY BUTZ' VISIT.

3. DEPARTMENT, AID AND AGRICULTURE SHOULD BE AWARE THAT PL-480 NEGOTIATIONS WITH SARG PROBABLY WILL TAKE SOME TIME, GIVEN CURRENT LACK OF EXPERIENCE WITHIN SARG ON SUCH MATTERS. WE DOUBT OFFICIALS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED NOW WERE DOING PL 480 BUSINESS WITH US IN THE VERY EARLY SIXTIES. THERE WILL BE A DEFINITE LACK OF FAMILIARITY ON SYRIAN SIDE AND NEGOTIATIONS PLUS EDUCATION EFFORT WILL BE INVOLVED ON OUR SIDE. AS REFTEL POINTS OUT, PL 480 IS COMPLEX AGREEMENT REQUIRING DETAILED ATTENTION TO LEGAL AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS. AND WITH SARG, WE WILL BE DEALING WITH GROUP VERY UNFAMILIAR WITH PL 480 AND MORE TIME WILL BE NECESSARY AS DISTINCT FROM, SAY EGYPT OR JORDAN.

4. WE RECOGNIZE PROBLEMS AHEAD, AS OUTLINED PARA 3 OF REFTEL, AND WE ARE PREPARING THE GROUND WITHIN SARG TO UNDERSTAND REASONS FOR PL 480 AGREEMENT'S PROVISIONS. WE WILL HAVE FURTHER EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITIES TO GET MESSAGE ACROSS DURING VISIT OF AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NOOTER.

5. WE ARE MAKING INFORMAL SOUNDINGS RE AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATE SARG OFFICIALS TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH AGRICULTURE/AID OFFICIALS BEGINNING NOV 7.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: WE NEED CONCURRENT PRELIMINARY COMMITMENT ON PART OF AGRICULTURE/AID THAT NOVEMBER 6 ARRIVAL DAMASCUS IS POSSIBLE. WILL CABLE RESULTS OUR SOUNDINGS RE AVAILABILITY SARG OFFICIALS BY OCT 29.  
MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE  
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